



FAIRFAX COUNTY

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Office of Site Development Services
12055 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5503

V I R G I N I A

March 5, 2002

02-03

TO: All Architects, Builders, Developers, Engineers and Surveyors Practicing in Fairfax County

SUBJECT Amendments to the *The Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*, (Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance) and the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual related to Tree Preservation and Planning

On February 11, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted amendments to the Public Facilities Manual (PFM) (Chapter 2, 12 and the index), the Zoning Ordinance (Articles 13, 18 and 20) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 101 of *The Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*). In general, the adopted amendments to the PFM constitute a significant update and reorganization of Chapter 12-Vegetation, Preservation and Planting, which has not received a comprehensive review since its inclusion in the PFM in the 1970's. Since that time, amendments to separate sections have resulted in an awkward sequencing of information that can be difficult to follow. The adopted amendments reorganize Chapter 12 in sequential order from the planning and design phase of land development through the end of construction.

More specifically, the adopted amendments to the PFM update and clarify: the tree cover requirements in terms of the calculations; the selection of trees and other vegetation to be preserved; the procedures for mitigating damage to off-site trees; and the procedures for mitigating impacts on Resource Protection Areas. The adopted amendments eliminate additional canopy credits for trees preserved in Resource Protection Areas and floodplains, and eliminate the automatic deduction for building areas in determining the tree cover requirement for subdivisions. In addition, the adopted amendments provide new incentives for the preservation of certain existing trees, for using native and desirable tree species and for planting trees that provide energy conservation.

The adopted amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance emphasize the use of existing and new trees to satisfy the tree cover requirements; remove the methodology for determining tree cover in order to centralize it in the PFM; and clarify the modification process to allow a modification of the tree cover requirement in instances where development is proposed on a site devoid of trees and where the strict provisions of the tree cover requirement would preclude a reasonable use of the lot. The Zoning Ordinance includes a third modification provision for additions to or modifications of existing structures or uses.

The amendments described above become effective on April 12, 2002. The following types of plans are grandfathered: Subdivision Plan (excluding Preliminary Plats), Site Plans, Public Improvement Plans and Grading Plans submitted prior to 12:01 a.m., April 16, 2002, provided that such plans are approved no later than July 15, 2002.

A training session on the amendments will be held on April 9, 2002, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Room 106, Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia. (Sign in will be from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.) To register for this session, please call the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services Training Center (703) 324-1820. It is important to pre-register for this session to ensure adequate seating and training materials for everyone who wishes to attend.

If you have any questions concerning the approved amendments, please contact Mike Knapp, Director, Urban Forestry Division at (703) 324-1770.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE ON ORIGINAL

Michelle A. Brickner, Director
Office of Site Development Services

cc: John Wesley White, Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Zofia A. Zager, Director, Office of Building Code Services, DPWES
Mike Knapp, Director, Urban Forestry Division, OSDS, DPWES